

The Decline in African American Enlistment in the U.S. Army

A Monograph  
By

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## ABSTRACT

THE DECLINE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ENLISTMENT IN THE U.S. ARMY by  
Major Alexis A. Neal, United States Army. 51 pages.

This monograph will argue that Black Americans, who have historically enlisted in the Army in overwhelming proportions with respect to national populations, are now pursuing other opportunities outside of the Army. The U.S. Army and African Americans have shared a unique and somewhat dependent relationship. At one point, African Americans, who were less than 12 percent of the U.S. population, represented more than 30 percent of the U.S. Army's population. In recent years, African American enlistment has dropped to about 13 percent and constitutes less than 17 percent of the total force structure.

This decline in African American Army enlistment correlates with the broadening American cultural acceptance of minorities; a generally negative perception of the George W. Bush administration and the war in Iraq by African Americans; and an extremely positive perceived future for African Americans in the United States. Increased opportunities lend themselves to African Americans achieving higher levels of education, an expanding middle class, and significant socioeconomic advancements in the U.S. and internationally. Generally speaking, or at least according to some selected media and surveys, African Americans oppose the premise for invading Iraq and distrust the Bush administration.

While some military officials and social scientists have expressed concern about the decline, others believe Hispanic American enlistment will fill the void left by African Americans. Observing the apparent trends, this monograph believes the African American Army population will continue to drop to show a true representation of the American population and the Hispanic American population will continue to grow in the Army. As the demographics change and the Hispanic American population exceeds the African American population, the Army has to be prepared.

To ensure that African American representation in the Army does not fall below the national population, the Army should: effectively communicate to the African American population the available opportunities that exist; use the Internet to communicate the strategic messages; and continue the community outreach programs in neighboring communities and expand them into urban areas.

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## Introduction

The United States Army has endured some significant challenges associated with its history, including suppressing insurgencies, defeating tyrants, winning world wars, and, as this monograph will focus on, integrating minorities into the force.<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Army led the rest of the country in implementing integration of, providing equal opportunity for, and assisting in the education of minorities. When Frederick Douglass stated, "Once let the Black man get upon his person the brass letters U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pockets, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States,"<sup>2</sup> he was predicting that many Black Americans would pursue enlistment into the military to legitimize their U.S. citizenship through service to the nation.<sup>3</sup>

As the U.S. Declaration of Independence states, all men are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights. Among these rights are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Many Black Americans viewed military service as a way to improve their existing socioeconomic background and break away from the post-traumatic slave syndrome as Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary described in her book, *Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing*.<sup>4</sup> Military service became African Americans' gateway to their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. Some Black Americans viewed military service as the contribution to their nation; others viewed it as a national conspiracy to exterminate the African American race. More than 150 years after Frederick Douglass' prophetic statement, millions of Black Americans have

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<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster defines "minority" as a part of a population differing from others in some characteristics and often subjected to differential treatment.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Douglass, *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave* (Boston, MA: The Anti-Slavery Office – The Project Gutenberg E-book, 2006), 27.

<sup>3</sup> **African American.** Refers to Americans of African descent; descendants of African slaves. Previously, the single largest racial group of the United States. The term African American can be used interchangeably with Black Americans. Throughout this study, the classification of African American and Black American is used without prejudice or malice.

<sup>4</sup> Joy Leary DeGruy, Ph.D, *Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome: America's Legacy of Enduring Injury and Healing* (Milwaukie, OR: Uptone Press, 2005), 42.

served as volunteers and as draftees in the U.S. Army. Over the course of the last century and half, 87 Black men have been awarded the nation's highest medal, the Medal of Honor. Robert Augustus Sweeney is the only Black service member awarded two Medals of Honor.<sup>5</sup>

What reasons account for Blacks' continued enlistment through the Civil War and two world wars when Black units were relegated to supply functions until they proved themselves in combat? Why did the enlistments continue when the U.S. government force-fed desegregation following World War II and the Korean Conflict? Why did Blacks feel they were being targeted for execution by means of the draft in Vietnam during the height of the Civil Rights Movement? Before the end of the 20th century, at the height of the Cold War, what accounts for an all-time high enlistment of Blacks, who represented less than 12 percent of the national population, but represented more than 30 percent of the nation's Army? Furthermore, what has occurred in the 21st century that African Americans represent about 13 percent of the population and about 17 percent of the Army?

Demographic data acquired by the human resource departments of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force provided the information to put the decline in Army enlistment into perspective. In 1997, 27 percent of the Army was African American; ten years later, they made up less than 18 percent of the Army, more than 10 percent of the Marine Corps, 18 percent of the Navy, and 15 percent of the Air Force. Both the Navy and the Air Force exhibited slight increases in their African American populations. For instance, the Navy in 1994 was about 16 percent African American. In contrast, the Marine Corps witnessed the African American population drop from 19 percent in 1988 to about 10 percent in 2007. Throughout the services, African American enlistment has dropped by more than 52 percent of what it was at the start of the Iraq War. Offsetting the decline of African Americans in the Army, the Hispanic American population in

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<sup>5</sup> Home of the Heroes, Double Medal of Honor Recipients, [http://www.homeofheroes.com/e-books/moh\\_double/doubles\\_05.html](http://www.homeofheroes.com/e-books/moh_double/doubles_05.html) (accessed May 7, 2008).

the Army has more than doubled since the 1980s. Hispanic Americans, who represent more than 14 percent of the U.S. population, also represent 11 percent of the Army's population.<sup>6</sup> (Refer to tables 1 through 7 for comparison of military demographics.)

This monograph argues that African Americans, who have historically served in higher proportions in the Army, have decreased enlistment because of broadening American cultural acceptance, African Americans' perception of the war in Iraq, and the perceived future of African Americans in the United States. African Americans are benefiting from greater opportunities and systems for minorities to achieve advanced educations and capabilities to attain professional careers. African Americans generally oppose the premise for the Iraq war and mistrust George W. Bush's administration. In contrast to 40 years ago, many Black Americans perceive an attainable future of equality and prosperity.

Although the Army has led the nation in providing advancement for minorities and equal opportunities, the declining propensity of Blacks to enlist is exacerbated by the country becoming more accepting of the cultural diversities of minorities. Educators, entertainers, religious leaders, politicians, the professional working class, and athletes have become the significant voices of influence for young Blacks, who historically joined the Army because they perceived the military to be a more tolerant, meritocratic environment, with less racial discrimination compared with the civilian labor market or educational system.<sup>7</sup> Democratic presidential candidate Senator Barack Obama, who is only the fifth Black senator of the United States and is the first legitimate Black presidential candidate, is evidence of national acceptance of cultural diversity. It is safe to assume that there is something transpiring in the African American culture that may be decreasing the propensity of young Black men and women to serve in the Army.

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<sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/prod/2007pubs/08abstract/pop.pdf> (accessed July 30, 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Meredith A. Kleykamp, "College, Jobs, or the Military? Enlistment During a Time of War," *Social Science Quarterly*, no. 87.2 (June 2006): 272.

When considering the number of young men and women who enlisted in the Army between the time the country declared its independence and World War II, it appears most of the population of the United States today no longer defines or considers military service as a criterion for American citizenship. As fewer Black Americans join the military, America has become more accepting of the cultural diversities of minorities. Now that the Hispanic American population has eclipsed the Black American population and increased numbers of Hispanics enlist in the Army, Hispanics will most likely share similar experiences as Blacks.<sup>8</sup> As the cultural demographics of the Army change, Army leadership has to be prepared to understand the cultural differences of minorities and be able to communicate positive messages to potential service members.

## **Historical**

African Americans endured great adversities to gain the opportunity to serve the country, and once allowed, suffered appalling conditions to attain equality: now, when the conditions and opportunities for service are optimal, African American enlistment continues to drop. The nation refused to award the Medal of Honor to African Americans for their contributions during World War II. President William Clinton, in a ceremony on January 13, 1997, awarded seven African Americans the Medal of Honor, six posthumously.<sup>9</sup>

Since the Civil War, what has altered African Americans' perception of service and citizenship? During the Civil War, Black Americans enlisted in the Army mainly serving on the side of the Union. In many cases, slaves and freed Blacks flocked to the lines of Union units as the Union Army defeated Confederates and swept through the South. Liberated slaves, often referred to as contraband of war, assisted the Union by performing service and support functions for the Union units. Following the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, freed Blacks,

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<sup>8</sup> According to 2007 U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanic Americans population is estimated at 14.2%, and African American population is estimated at 13.8% of the entire U.S. population.

<sup>9</sup> The Official Site of the Medal of Honor.  
<http://www.medalofhonor.com/AfricanAmericans1st.htm> (accessed May 7, 2008).

runaways, and former slaves banded together to form Colored Regiments officered by Whites. Many educated Blacks and abolitionists believed that they would gain the respect as men if they fought for the nation.

Throughout the Civil War, more than 200,000 Blacks enlisted: 94,000 were ex-slaves from states that had seceded from the Union, 44,000 were ex-slaves or freemen from the Border States, and the rest were recruited from the Northern States and the Colorado Territory. African American Soldiers participated in every major campaign of 1864-65 except Sherman's invasion of Georgia.<sup>10</sup> The most notable Colored Regiment was the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry commanded by Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. Generally speaking, White Soldiers and officers believed that Black men lacked the courage to fight and fight well.<sup>11</sup>

Although Colored units were not expected to perform at a high degree of effectiveness, they proved themselves reputable, despite the discrimination in pay, lack of uniforms, and other issues. Chapter 1 of the Militia Act of 1862 authorized men of African descent as well as emancipated slaves to enlist in the Union Army. As compensation, Blacks would receive \$10.00 a month, plus a clothing allowance of \$3.50, which was only a portion of the pay White Soldiers received. Some units refused the partial pay to protest the inequality of pay and display their dedication to service until Attorney General Edward Bates ruled, "Blacks who were free men at the outset of the war and subsequently volunteered for military service should receive the same pay as White Soldiers."<sup>12</sup>

Between the Civil War and the World Wars, African Americans continued to distinguish themselves in battle and gained considerable notoriety in politics and attaining civil rights. The

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<sup>10</sup> Bernard C. Nalty, *Strength for the Fight: A History of Black Americans in the Military* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 43.

<sup>11</sup> Gary A. Donaldson, *The History of African Americans in the Military* (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1991), 36.

<sup>12</sup> Nalty, 40.

four regiments of African American Soldiers who received their legendary nickname, Buffalo Soldiers, served with distinction on the Western frontier and elsewhere in the years following the Civil War.<sup>13</sup> In 1870, Hiram Rhodes Revels from Mississippi became the first African American senator to take the oath of office. In 1877, Henry O. Flipper became the first Black American to attend the United States Military Academy.<sup>14</sup> Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and states' laws guaranteed Blacks the right to vote, rights of citizenship, right to own property, and right to marry. As Frederick Douglass suggested, African Americans fighting in the Civil War proved to be the key element in pursuing the right to be considered equal men.

Racially motivated slander, bigotry, and condemnation of African Americans' wartime service plagued the Army at the beginning of World War I. Army leadership initially prohibited Black Americans from serving in combat units. Despite these views, large numbers of African Americans volunteered to fight in the "Jim Crow" segregated Army for their country in 1917-18.<sup>15</sup> On the first day of the draft in May 1917, more than 700,000 Black men volunteered.<sup>16</sup> Many White Americans ignored or downplayed the African Americans' contributions to the defense of the nation.

Continuing through World War II, however, America witnessed positive milestones in African American history and military service in pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. During World War II, leaders relegated Black units to performing support and service support duties only. Senior White and junior Black officers commanded segregated Black units. Black units repeatedly demonstrated their bravery, loyalty, and ability in combat or in support of front-line

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<sup>13</sup> William Leckie et al., *Buffalo Soldiers: A Narrative of the Negro Soldiers in the West* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 6.

<sup>14</sup> Diane Cole, "History on the Hill: Breaking the Barrier," *U.S. News and World Report*, May 7, 2008.

<sup>15</sup> Leo Bogart et al., *Social Research and the Desegregation of the U.S. Army* (Chicago, IL: Markham Publishing Company, 1951), 17.

<sup>16</sup> Nalty, 108.

troops.<sup>17</sup> Oftentimes, they accomplished these tasks without proper training or adequate equipment. The number of African Americans serving in the European Theater jumped from 97,725 in 1941 to 504,000 in 1943.<sup>18</sup> Before the conclusion of the war, military leaders called proud Black units to the front line to fight alongside White units.

By the end of World War II, Black service members were battling with discrimination and segregation by White U.S. Army officers and service members and engaged in combat with an uncompromising enemy. With more than 1 million African Americans having served, the military began to evolve from the Jim Crow culture and set the stage for President Harry Truman's landmark Executive Order 9981, in July 1948, which forced desegregation throughout the military.<sup>19</sup>

Executive Order 9981 set the conditions for the modern Army. President Truman's executive order was designed to correct some of the injustices of segregation and racial discrimination. Instead of being rewarded as heroes, the Black veterans were welcomed with the knowledge that their skin color did not bring with it dignity and respect. Many Black veterans were unwilling to submit quietly to continuing racial discrimination once they returned to the United States. Although signed in 1948, Executive Order 9981 really did not take effect until the nation identified there were not enough White soldiers during the Korean Conflict. The authors of *Black Soldier, White Army: The 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment in Korea* produced a detailed, balanced, critical study of the African Americans in the 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment and some of the atrocities, such as lynching and murders of Black Soldiers by White American citizens.

The 24th Infantry Regiment was the last combat regiment to desegregate during the Korean Conflict, and it experienced some of the same difficulties as most units in the Army at

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<sup>17</sup> Bogart, 19.

<sup>18</sup> Lee Nichols, *Breakthrough on the Color Front* (New York: Random House, 1953), 205.

<sup>19</sup> Nalty, 242.

that time.<sup>20</sup> According to historical records and the authors, the 24th Infantry Regiment fought as well and as badly as any other unit in Korea.<sup>21</sup> The regiment battled with bad leadership, poor performance, disobedience, and drug problems, but also had the additional problems of lack of trust and self-confidence that the system of segregation had imposed.<sup>22</sup> The commanders, who were often White officers who were considered to be less-than-stellar performers, tended to prejudge the Black Soldiers by their race instead of the performance or potential.<sup>23</sup> In less than 90 days, the Regiment had nine commanders. In battle, the 24th either performed well or poorly, based on the leadership provided. When the unit performed well, it was never attributed to the Soldiers. But when the unit performed poorly, the performance was attributed to the Black Soldiers, never the White leaders. Rumors spread throughout the 25th Infantry Division, and subsequently back to the U.S., that the Black Soldiers often ran from battle and in some cases abandoned their White officers behind.<sup>24</sup> After the first year of the war, mobs of Whites lynched, mutilated, and murdered 70 African American Soldiers, some still in uniform.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the atrocities associated with the 24th Infantry Regiment, the Korean Conflict was the beginning of a new era for African Americans because it was the first time that African Americans were integrated in all combat and combat service forces and were in all major combat operations.<sup>26</sup> Initially, the military entered into the war with segregated units, still left over from World War II, but by the second half of the war, most if not all forces were integrated with both

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<sup>20</sup> Joseph L. Galloway, “The 24th Infantry and the Failure of the Segregated Army” (Washington, D.C.: Armed Forces Press Service), African Americans Military History, <http://www.ritesofpassage.org/mhistory.htm> (accessed October 16, 2008).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Nalty, 257.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 258-263.

<sup>25</sup> C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 2nd Edition (Boston: Boston University Press, 1955), 114.

<sup>26</sup> Bogart, 50.

Black and White Soldiers. After the integration took effect during the Korean Conflict, hundreds of Black officers commanded units. It appeared the “second-class” stigma was almost conquered when Blacks were posted to elite units such as combat aviation and served in a variety of technical military specialties. By the end of the Korean War, more than 600,000 African Americans had served in the military to return to America at the onset of the heavily contested Civil Rights Movement.<sup>27</sup> Many Blacks chose to stay in the armed forces after the war because of the improved social environment, financial benefits, educational opportunities, and promotion potential.<sup>28</sup> In comparison, the world outside of the Army looked grim.

The Vietnam War saw the highest proportion of Blacks ever to serve in an American war to that date.<sup>29</sup> From 1965 through 1969, Blacks represented more than 12.5 percent of the Soldiers in Vietnam and less than 11 percent of the American population.<sup>30</sup> Volunteers and draftees included many frustrated Blacks whose impatience with the war and the delays in racial progress in America led to race riots in a number of cities and on ships and military bases. To many opponents of the war, it was easy to argue that Black conscripts fighting and dying in an unpopular war were precisely those citizens who had least enjoyed the American dream.<sup>31</sup> Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. described Vietnam as a White man’s war fought by young Blacks who were twice as likely to see combat.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> William T. Bowers et al., *Black Soldier White Army* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 1996) 36.

<sup>28</sup> Dennis D. Nelson, “A Report on Military Civil Rights,” *The Negro History Bulletin* (January 1953), 75-78.

<sup>29</sup> Kleykamp, 272.

<sup>30</sup> Charles C. Moskos et al., *All That We Can Be: Black Leadership and Racial Integration the Army Way* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), 8.

<sup>31</sup> *African-Americans Have Legacy of Military Service, Sacrifice* (Washington, D.C.: Armed Forces Press Service, February 12, 2008).

<sup>32</sup> Spencer C. Tucker, *The Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War: A Political, Social, and Military History* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Publishers, 1998), 6.

Despite the apparent frustrations of Vietnam, African American enlistment in the military jumped with the advent of the all-volunteer force in 1973. At the conclusion of the draft in 1973 and during the military restructuring, African Americans made up about 17 percent of the military's force. By the mid-1980s, after the restructuring and before the end of the Cold War, Black Americans, who made up less than 12 percent of the U.S. population, represented more than 30 percent of the Army. Concurrent with the Persian Gulf War (January 1991), African Americans' numbers began to drop to about 25 percent of the Army, which stayed constant until the dusk of the 20th Century.

In the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the percentage of Blacks in the Army began to drop significantly. African American representation in the Army steadily decreased from one fourth of the Army force in 2002 to less than 17 percent in 2006. Black enlistments have fallen by more than 58 percent since fiscal year 2000. Black women are overrepresented in the military, making up nearly a third of all women enlisted. (Refer to Table 1.) In fiscal year 2000, more than 42,000 Black men and women applied to enlist; in fiscal year 2005, just over 17,000 Blacks attempted to enlist.<sup>33</sup>

In the last century and a half, Black Americans endured tremendous hardships for the opportunity to serve the nation and defend national interests. When the Army appeared to be the route traveled for citizenship, many African Americans embraced the challenges put before them. When the Army led the nation in desegregation, African Americans benefited. Now that the nation requires more soldiers to enlist, African Americans are resisting. Since WW I, African Americans have overrepresented the population in the Army. African Americans' perception of service and citizenship has been altered to reflect a decline in enlistment which may display a true representation of the national population for African Americans.

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<sup>33</sup> Office of the Army Demographics, The Changing Profile of the Army, <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/HR/docs/demographics/ChangingProfileFinalCopy.pdf> (accessed July 17, 2008).

## Growth and Acceptance of African American Culture

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization defines cultural diversity as encompassing the differences that exist among people, such as language, dress, and traditions, and the way societies organize themselves, their conception of morality and religion, and the way they interact with the environment.<sup>34</sup> Within America's many cultures and subcultures, the culture of the U.S. Army exists. Although the U.S. Army is successful in retaining Black Soldiers, recently it is having a much more difficult time in recruiting Black Soldiers.

The U.S. Army is an institution that people must choose to join and must choose to continue serving in if it is to sustain the all-volunteer force. The University of Massachusetts Amherst recently conducted a self-assessed job satisfaction study of gender and ethnicity in the U.S. military, which found that African American and Latino men and women have higher job satisfaction than White men.<sup>35</sup> If African Americans share the highest job satisfaction within the Army, then why are African Americans decreasing enlistment in the Army? This monograph suggests that it is not what the U.S. Army is or is not doing, but what the rest of America is doing. This is a result of nationwide acceptance of cultural diversity of minority cultures. The U.S. Army has made the most significant advancements in promoting equality and acceptance of different cultures over the last half century since desegregation. While the Army led in equal opportunity, the rest of America cautiously observed what was transpiring in the Army. This study does not

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<sup>34</sup> United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, *Diversity of Cultural Expressions*, [http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php?url\\_ID=33014&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php?url_ID=33014&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) (accessed September 30, 2008).

<sup>35</sup> Jennifer Hickes-Lindquist, "Study: Blacks, Hispanics, Women Most Satisfied with Military," Black Military World, News and Information [http://www.blackmilitaryworld.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=565](http://www.blackmilitaryworld.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=565) (accessed July 7, 2008).

suggest that racism is dead, but rather that the rest of America has become more accepting of the cultural diversity of minorities.

Minorities – specifically, Black Americans – have become more prominent in the entertainment industry, politics, corporate America, the justice and legal systems, and other areas throughout American society. Black networks and social groups create forums for African Americans to gather and share ideas about business, politics, and finances. Online social and professional communities such as Black Commentator, Black Planet, Black Net, Black Enterprise, and historically Black fraternities and sororities are some examples of the forums for African Americans to share ideas and discussions to promote African American prosperity and affluence. As early as the early 1990s, historically Black colleges and universities began grooming future Black graduates to assume positions in corporate businesses. Nina Munk wrote a story in CNN Money and *Fortune* magazine describing how the president of Florida A&M University, Frederick Humphries, had a vision for recruiting talented high school students to attend FAMU. After getting the talent to FAMU, he recruited corporate businesses to donate money to fund scholarships and draw their future hires from the talent pool Humphries built at FAMU.<sup>36</sup>

Between the conclusion of Vietnam and the end of the Cold War, the U.S. Army was the premier gateway for Blacks to gain a foothold in education and business, as the rest of America battled through the Civil Rights Movement. Many Blacks took advantage of the Army's education assistance programs to achieve advanced degrees. As Black Americans became more successful, Black businesspeople and entertainers began to pave the road for future entrepreneurs

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<sup>36</sup> Nina Munk, "Hello Corporate America! Talented African Americans are Being Groomed for Big Business at Florida A&M. If You Want Them, Get Out Your Checkbook," *CNN Money, Fortune*, July 6, 1998, [http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune\\_archive/1998/07/06/244817/index.htm](http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune_archive/1998/07/06/244817/index.htm) (accessed July 11, 2008).

to formulate forums and business groups for educating, training, and developing successful Black businesspeople and entertainers.

In conjunction, the U.S. government enacted several programs to assist minorities. Government officials designed many affirmative action programs to aid disadvantaged people with preferential access to education, employment, and health and social care.<sup>37</sup> Executive Order 11246, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on September 24, 1965, required contractors and government offices to implement affirmative action plans to increase the participation of minorities and women in the workplace. The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 was another program that assisted Vietnam Veterans in education and job placement. Because of the vast number of Blacks drafted for Vietnam, the Assistance Act of 1974 resulted in many Blacks receiving government jobs and the ability to pursue education. These programs mandated certain numbers of minorities to be hired, educated, trained, and taken care of to correct many years of slavery, discrimination, and atrocities.<sup>38</sup>

Economically, Blacks benefited from the advances made during the Civil Rights Movement. Prior to the movement, segregation confined the small number of Black professionals to serving the Black population. They were primarily small businesspeople, shop owners, ministers, teachers, and undertakers, with a few doctors, lawyers, and pharmacists.<sup>39</sup> According to analysts who contributed to the PBS *Frontline* article, "The Two Nations of Black America," the Black middle class has grown substantially, almost quadrupling since 1965.<sup>40</sup> Prior to the 1960s, because of racial discrimination, segregation, and the fact that most Blacks lived in the rural

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<sup>37</sup> Affirmative action is the policy of providing advantages for people of minority groups who are perceived to have been discriminated against, with the aim of creating a more equal society.

<sup>38</sup> Stephen L. Carter, *Reflections of an Affirmative Action Baby* (New York: Basic Books, 1991), 225.

<sup>39</sup> National Civil Rights Museum, Strategies for Change, <http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org/gallery/gallery2.asp> (accessed July 12, 2008).

<sup>40</sup> A.J. Robinson, *The Two Nations of Black America*, PBS, February 1997, [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/economics/analysis.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/economics/analysis.html) (accessed October 1, 2008).

South, African Americans experienced a limited opportunity structure because of the harsh laws present at that time. In 1960, 6 percent of African Americans owned their own homes; by 2000, 47 percent of African Americans who now numbered 39 million owned their homes. The Black middle class grew at a faster rate than the White middle class in that period, increasing from about 15 percent to 60 percent of the Black population.<sup>41</sup>

The racial disparity in poverty rates has also narrowed. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 1965, White America had a total population poverty rate of 13.3 percent; 40 years later, in 2005, that poverty rate was at 10.6 percent. In comparison, Blacks experienced a poverty rate greater than 52 percent in 1965; it had declined to 24.7 percent in 2005.<sup>42</sup>

Black Americans have made significant advancements in education over the past four decades. Strong support for the education and social advancement of African American students has come from the 39 historically Black colleges and universities in the United States. Prior to affirmative action programs, African Americans had little access to education, especially above the high school level, except at historically Black colleges. Of course, there are some other exceptions. Irving L. Peddrew III enrolled to study electrical engineering at Virginia Tech in 1953 to become the first African American to attend a historically White, four-year public institution in any of the eleven states of the former Confederacy.<sup>43</sup> James Meredith (African American and Choctaw Native American decent) became the first person of color to attend the University of

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<sup>41</sup> A.J. Robinson, *The Two Nations of Black America*, PBS, February 1997, [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/economics/analysis.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/race/economics/analysis.html) (accessed October 1, 2008).

<sup>42</sup> U.S. Census Report, Historical Poverty Table, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/hstpov/hstpov2.html> (accessed July 14, 2008).

<sup>43</sup> Peter Wallenstein, *The First Black Students at Virginia Tech, 1953-1963. Timeline of Black History at Virginia Tech.* (University Archives, Virginia Tech).

Mississippi in 1962.<sup>44</sup> In the resulting riots, two people were killed, 28 U.S. Marshals were shot, and 160 people injured.

Enlistment incentives such as the Army's GI and Montgomery Bills, Green to Gold programs, and ROTC scholarships made it possible for many Blacks to achieve advanced education after high school. Today, about 86 percent of African Americans from 25 to 29 years of age have graduated from high school, a rate comparable to that of Whites.<sup>45</sup> (Refer to Table 11.) In 1980, 8 percent of African Americans were graduating from college, still less than half the white rate of 17 percent. Today, about a third of Black high school graduates attend college, with about 43 percent graduating from college.<sup>46</sup> White students attend college at a higher rate, about 42 percent of high school graduates, and about 23 percent graduate.<sup>47</sup>

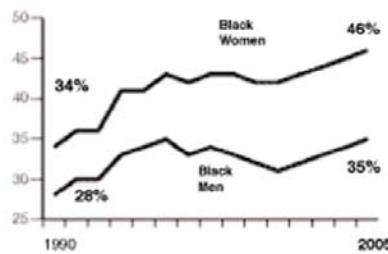


Figure 1. The rise in African Americans graduating from colleges and universities.  
Source: Journal of Blacks in Higher Education.

Because African Americans are obtaining more opportunities and higher levels of education, they are now holding a greater variety of professions and jobs. In recent years, Blacks have been particularly successful in securing middle-income employment in the public sector. *Ebony* magazine, which ranks twelfth in the world's largest publications and is the premier

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<sup>44</sup> James Howard Meredith, *Three Years in Mississippi* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1966), 9.

<sup>45</sup> "Black Student College Graduation Rates Inch Higher but a Large Racial Gap Persists," *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (New York: 2007), 3.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>47</sup> College Scholarship, Grants for African Americans, <http://www.collegescholarships.org/grants/african-american.htm> (accessed July 16, 2008).

magazine for African Americans, states Blacks are twice as likely as Whites to work for city, state, or federal government.

Some Black Americans, such as basketball superstar Michael Jordan; U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice; Democratic Senator and Presidential candidate Barack Obama; and activist, author, and talk show host Oprah Winfrey, have reached international stardom, but most significant is the rate at which Blacks are obtaining middle-class and above status. DiversityInc says four African American males (John Thompson, Symantec; Kenneth I. Chenault, American Express; Ronald A. Williams, Aetna; Clarence Otis, Darden Restaurants) currently hold chief executive officer positions in Fortune 500 companies.<sup>48</sup> Black-owned businesses have quadrupled since 1997 to 2002. Black-owned firms had the highest growth rate of all minority small businesses between 1997 and 2002 at 45.4 percent in the number of firms and 24.5 percent in total receipts, and Blacks owned 5 percent of all U.S. firms.<sup>49</sup>

America's growing acceptance of cultural diversities aids minorities in developing and achieving positions to acquire better opportunities in education, wealth, and pursuit of the American dream. African Americans have capitalized on these systems and now represent the fastest-growing affluent minority in the nation. The Army developed the model for the rest of the nation to reward integration of minorities and now, many African Americans no longer see the Army as the primary route to success.

## **African American Perception of Military Service, Iraq War, and the G.W. Bush Administration**

In the March – April 2006 edition of *The Non-Violent Activist*, Kenyon Farrow wrote an article titled “Not Showing Up,” referring to the record low numbers of Blacks enlisting in the

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<sup>48</sup> Editors of DiversityInc, “Fortune 500 Black, Latino, Asian CEOs” (DiversityInc, July 22, 2008) <http://www.diversityinc.com/public/3895.cfm> (accessed August 16, 2008).

<sup>49</sup> Ying Lowrey, *Minorities in Business: A Demographic Review of Minority Business Ownership*, (United States Small Business Administration, Office of Economic Research, Office of Advocacy, no. 298, April 2007), 3.

Army. Farrow, an antiwar activist, describes the change in perception of military service among the Black community and its leaders. He stated, “Key role models – parents, ministers, and the like – who have traditionally encouraged military enlistment, are now actively discouraging Black youth from signing up.”<sup>50</sup> The Army G-1 explained the change in young Blacks’ attitudes toward the armed services by citing new civilian job opportunities and the large proportion of female-headed Black households.<sup>51</sup> The Army also explained that Hispanic Americans are filling the void left by African American enlistments.<sup>52</sup>

The Army Recruiting Command acknowledged that the Iraq War has presented special challenges in African American communities. Joseph Williams and Kevin Baron claim in a *Boston Globe* article that the unpopular Iraq War is the biggest problem, combined with mistrust of the Bush administration and the notion that Black Soldiers are being steered to combat jobs, added to the lingering perceptions from the Vietnam War.<sup>53</sup>

Shortly after the invasion of Iraq, Dewayne Wickham wrote a story in *USA Today*, “Iraq War Burdens Black Americans in Many Ways,” in which he drew correlations between Iraq and Vietnam. Wickham described some of the sentiments and emotions expressed by African American and civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., who spoke out against Vietnam because he ‘knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in

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<sup>50</sup> Kenyon Farrow, “Not Showing Up: Blacks, Military Recruitment and the Antiwar Movement” *The Non-Violent Activist*, no. 27 (March-April 2006), 1.

<sup>51</sup> Office of the Army Demographics, The Changing Profile of the Army, <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/HR/docs/demographics/ChangingProfileFinalCopy.pdf> (accessed July 17, 2008).

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Joseph Williams et al., “Military Sees Big Decline In Black Enlistees: Iraq War cited in 58% Drop Since 2000,” *Boston Globe*, October 7, 2007.

rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic destructive suction tube.”<sup>54</sup>

Wickham compared King’s opposition to the war in Vietnam with some of the current Black leaders’ opposition to the invasion of Iraq. He conveyed King’s sentiments that young Black men who are already politically, socially, and economically disadvantaged and oppressed in the United States are drafted to fight and die to guarantee the liberties and rights of another ethnic group who were also disadvantaged and oppressed.<sup>55</sup> Many Blacks during the Vietnam era believed the government intentionally deceived the public about the true nature of the war; this, coupled with the draft, fueled African Americans’ distrust of the government.<sup>56</sup>

In “The 2004 Political Landscape,” the Pew Research Center reported that in 2003, 55 percent of Whites surveyed believed everyone has an obligation to fight for the United States, right or wrong, while only 30 percent of African Americans agreed.<sup>57</sup> By comparison, in 1999, the first year of Pew’s values survey, the proportions were 51 percent of Whites and 46 percent of African Americans. Military sociologist Dr. David R. Segal stated in the May 9, 2007, edition of the *Boston Globe* that in interviews he conducted, African American veterans of the Iraq invasion and occupation said, “This is not a Black people’s war. This is not a poor people’s war. This is an oilman’s war.”<sup>58</sup> The next question becomes: Why do African Americans today distrust the government, and how is this message being transferred to young Black men and women?

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<sup>54</sup> Dewayne Wickham, “Iraq War Burdens Black Americans in Many Ways,” *USA Today*, April 7, 2003.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> During the course of this research, no evidence was discovered that suggests African Americans are subjected to undue hardship or dying in disproportionate numbers in Iraq. In the 21st century all-volunteer Army, all members have an equal chance of deploying to combat.

<sup>57</sup> The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, “The 2004 Political Landscape” (November 5, 2003), 42.

<sup>58</sup> Derrick Z. Jackson, “For African Americans, Folly of This War Hits Home,” *The Boston Globe*, May 9, 2007.

Many Americans receive information about the government and its policies through the media. Historically, television, radio, and printed newspapers have been the primary media for transmission of political agendas. Since the Internet has become overwhelmingly popular, it has brought an almost instantaneous form of communication in which millions of people are capable of sharing information. A study conducted by the Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society suggests that more Americans prefer to use the Internet to *select* how they would receive information than other media.<sup>59</sup> The ease of Internet use has made it possible to blog, join forums, or create special interest groups to serve long-term or short-term purposes. Newspaper, radio, and television stations acknowledge the power of the Internet and thus are adapting their methods to reach a broader audience. With these methods, national leaders are reaching out to the Black community.

Some of these national leaders have long opposed the war in Iraq. Politicians and activists have made public statements, organized rallies, and initiated legislature in opposition to the war. In general, the more conservative leaders stress the importance of supporting the troops but opposing the war, whereas the controversial leaders stress the importance of being against the war and the administration. Through the conservative and the most controversial leaders, and sometimes even athletes and entertainers, the message not to support the war has been extremely effective.

Activist organizations continue to organize rallies, construct resolutions, and develop petitions in protest to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. African American activist Fred Mason, co-convener and president of the Maryland and District of Columbia's U.S. Labor Against War and American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO),

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<sup>59</sup> "Study Offers Early Look at How Internet Is Changing Daily Life," Stanford Institute for the Quantitative Study of Society (July 28, 2008).

organized a massive rally on the Mall in Washington, D.C., on January 27, 2007.<sup>60</sup> Mason addressed several key points. Of significant value was registering the AFL-CIO's opposition to the war.<sup>61</sup>

African American online communities are some of the influential sources discouraging young Black candidates from military enlistment. According to a survey commissioned by Radio One, "Most young Blacks trust Black media because they [media] understand me better."<sup>62</sup> With the growing propensity for Internet use, these organizations are reaching out to the Black communities with instantaneous results. The Black Radical Congress is one of many very influential Black Internet communities that oppose the war in Iraq. Others such as the Black Commentator, Black Planet, and Black Politics serve as meeting places for Black people to share ideas, blogs, and a common culture.

Lately, several Black influential entertainers are routinely expressing their opposition to the war and vocalizing attacks toward the president, which may correlate with why so many Black Americans oppose military service. In the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Kanye West, a very influential Black entertainer, stated on live television, "George Bush doesn't care about Black people."<sup>63</sup> D.L. Hughley, another Black influential entertainer, routinely criticizes the war in Iraq and the president's administration as he hosts the popular HBO weekly

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<sup>60</sup> Labor Standards: Information, Education, Discussion, [http://www.laborstandard.org/Iraq/Sweeney\\_Jan\\_27.htm](http://www.laborstandard.org/Iraq/Sweeney_Jan_27.htm) (accessed April 13, 2008).

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Radio One, "Largest National Survey of African Americans Provides Surprising Look at Black America," <http://www.radio-one.com/news/article.asp?ObjID=QcKLpilsZP&Content=27> (accessed July 28, 2008).

<sup>63</sup> Hurricane Katrina Relief Concert aired live on NBC Television, September 5, 2005. During the concert, Mike Myers and Kanye West appeared on stage together to request donations to assist in the recovery and relief efforts. During this time, Kanye West made the statement.

series *Def Comedy Jam*.<sup>64</sup> Hughley frequently makes jokes about the president and how his decisions are intentionally affecting Blacks.

The Black Radical Congress, one of the more critical Black Online communities also opposed the premise for invading and the continued occupation of the war in Iraq. The web site calls for the immediate withdrawal of troops and declares that President Bush's actions are criminal and immoral and demands his impeachment and criminal trial in the international criminal courts system.<sup>65</sup> Reverend Al Sharpton, a controversial leader in the Black community, also uses the Internet to accent his opposition to the war in Iraq. As early as March 2003, before the invasion, Sharpton conveyed his opposition to and distrust of the government. He continues to use the Internet, his radio talk show, and television interviews to convey accusations against the Bush administration.<sup>66</sup>

Poll data show that more Blacks oppose the war in Iraq compared to Whites. A 2005 Pew Research Center poll found that, "Blacks are less dependent on military service than they were once for jobs and educations opportunities," emphasizing that in less than one generation, the number of Blacks with four-year college education has doubled, and most Blacks were "nearly twice as likely as Whites to have strong reservations" about the war in Iraq.<sup>67</sup> The same poll also states that 85 percent of the Blacks surveyed believed President Bush was responsible for the poor performance of the relief efforts in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> HBO's Def Comedy Jam features rising and established Black comedians and is extremely popular with Blacks. It is one of the subsidiaries of Def Jam Recordings, which is owned by African American Russell Simmons.

<sup>65</sup> The Black Radical Congress, <http://www.blackradicalcongress.org/opposition.htm> (accessed September 23, 2008).

<sup>66</sup> Sharpton on Talk, <http://www.sharptontalk.net/> (accessed August 21, 2008).

<sup>67</sup> The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "Two in Three Critical of Bush's Relief Efforts, Huge Racial Divide Over Katrina and Its Consequences," September 8, 2005.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

Gallup's running poll on Iraq (data collected from May 2003 through February 2008) surveyed Americans for opinions as to whether the Bush administration deliberately misled the American public and subsequently led to the invasion in Iraq. Initially, as few as 67 percent of the total polled population felt they were not misled; five years later more than 53 percent felt they were. The same data show that less than 50 percent of Americans (not separated by race) feel less safe from terrorism since the military invaded Iraq and more than 58 percent of the polled Americans do not believe the troops in Iraq are making a difference.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, the most significant characteristic, which appeared in almost each case study, was that the majority of African Americans distrust the Bush administration.<sup>70</sup> Some of the studies suggest the administration's invasion of Iraq as the deciding factor for distrust. Other analysts suggest the distrust was exacerbated by the way the administration handled the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. Either independently or for a combination of reasons, the African American community disbelieves the current administration, resulting in African Americans steering clear from what is believed to be the nation's most effective tool, the Army. Although a significant percentage of the Black population may distrust the Bush administration, most African Americans perceive an affluent future.

## The Perceived Future of African Americans

Researchers from the Chicago Urban League conducted a study titled, *The Future of Economic Development for African Americans in the Chicago Metropolitan Area: The Next Ten Years*. This study along with others outlines some of the potential fates African Americans will experience. These studies paint optimistic futures for Blacks. The most common and significant themes of the studies are the rise of the Black middle class, increased levels of education, more

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<sup>69</sup> "Iraq," Gallup, <http://gallup.com/poll/1633/Iraq.aspx> (accessed October 2, 2008).

<sup>70</sup> Glen Ford, "Are Blacks Staying Away from the Military Because Mama Said So," *The Black Agenda Report*, no. 23 (July 29, 2008), 6.

involvement in politics, increased numbers of Blacks owning their own homes, and Black business proliferation. These studies attempt to project the future of Black Americans by looking at some of the trends of successful Black Americans. The most critical characteristic that affects this monograph is the absence of the suggestion of military service.

The Chicago Urban League study was sponsored by the BP Foundation and The Nielsen Company. David E. Thigpen, Kanu Iheukumere, T. Shawn Taylor, the primary authors for the study, concluded that cities and metropolitan areas and regions have become the interdependent pieces of a single larger economic system.<sup>71</sup> Through solving the problems faced by the city of Chicago, the nation will be capable of encouraging positive global economic activities.<sup>72</sup> The study identified the following characteristics for a positive future for African Americans: increased per capita and household income, rising educational achievement, increased property values, stabilized neighborhoods, Black business proliferation, greater tax receipts, lower incarceration rates for African American males, increased tourism and outside investment, and lower unemployment rates and heightened workforce productivity.<sup>73</sup>

Radio One commissioned a survey conducted by research firm Yankelovich that identified eleven specific segments within Black America. Cathy Hughes, founder of Radio One, expressed that the study was the first ever of its kind to try to determine what the African American or Black American identity is. The depth and breadth of the study revealed the improvements of African Americans socially, economically, educationally, and culturally. Most of the same themes identified by the Chicago Urban League resonate in the Yankelovich survey.

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<sup>71</sup> Chicago Urban League, *The Future of Economic Development for African Americans in the Chicago Metropolitan Area: The Next Ten Years*, February 2008, [http://www.thechicagourbanleague.org/723210130204959623/lib/723210130204959623/ Files/FINAL\\_08\\_AA\\_Eco\\_Study.pdf](http://www.thechicagourbanleague.org/723210130204959623/lib/723210130204959623/ Files/FINAL_08_AA_Eco_Study.pdf) (accessed July 24, 2008) 5.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 10.

The survey polled nearly 3,400 Black Americans between the ages of 13 and 74 to provide the most detailed snapshot of African American life in the U.S. today.<sup>74</sup> People polled were asked to provide information ranging from perceptions about African American history to expectations for the future of Blacks. A consistent statement from people polled (more than 60 percent) was, “Things are getting better for me.”<sup>75</sup> Out of the eleven characteristics identified by the Yankelevich survey, one of the most interesting characteristic that effects strategic communication is the way African Americans are receiving information: the radio, Internet, and television.<sup>76</sup> Most young African Americans communicate through the Internet and text messages and belong to Internet communities. Overwhelmingly, most Blacks trust Black media (newspapers, networks, and online communities), whereas less than eleven percent trust the government, giving credence to the Black community being the most persuasive advertisement medium.<sup>77</sup>

Jeff Douglas wrote one of the most comprehensive articles that covered the future of Black Americans for Black Entertainment Television. The article, “Black Progress in America,” also contributed to the CNN miniseries *Black in America*, hosted by special reporter Soledad O’Brien. There are some common themes to the previously identified surveys and studies. The studies, surveys, and articles attribute the success of African Americans to certain propensities.<sup>78</sup>

Douglas’ article identifies ten characteristics of the future for Black Americans. First, he describes how Blacks are entering into more entrepreneurship, starting small businesses, becoming CEOs for large corporations, and becoming business moguls. He also discusses how

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Radio One.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Jeff Douglas, “Black Progress in America,” Black Entertainment Television, <http://www.blackvoices.com/blogs/2008/07/22/black-steps-forward-in-america/> (accessed July 24, 2008).

Blacks are using the Internet to access online communities and creating more opportunities for employment and networking. He describes how Blacks are benefiting from the decline of overt racism, stemming from government no longer tolerating or humoring racism. Blacks are becoming more educated, as evidenced by increased numbers enrolling and graduating.<sup>79</sup>

Douglas explains how the Black entertainment industry will continue to grow in influence and wealth. The influence from hip-hop culture has created a \$4 billion-a-year industry, which affects fashion, language, music, and movies worldwide. The Black athlete has become overwhelming popular, inspiring millions throughout the world. Black actors have received recognition from Hollywood for their contributions to movies and television.<sup>80</sup>

Finally, Douglas estimates the effect of Blacks' contribution to politics. He explains how some African American politicians have become icons, such as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, former Secretary of State and retired General Colin Powell, and Senator Barack Obama. Through political reform, Black women have become empowered business owners, constituting the majority of the expanding Black-owned businesses. He finally calculates that Obama being elected as President would be a positive inspiration to the future of Black Americans.<sup>81</sup>

The articles and studies described how a new generation of entrepreneurial African Americans desire to become business moguls, CEOs, and own their own businesses. These studies identified the increased number of Black-owned businesses and multi-million-dollar companies directed toward the Black Community, such as Radio One. African Americans are achieving these successes because of the levels of education that have recently become available.

The studies and articles expressed how the digital divide between African Americans and the rest of the population has disappeared. In comparison with the overall population, Black

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

Americans trail by only 2 percentage points in regards to being online. Internet access creates greater access to jobs, news, information, and networking. The Yankelovich study revealed that about 70 percent of African American adults have access to the Internet, and more than 90 percent of African American teens are online.<sup>82</sup>

The studies demonstrate that overt racial discrimination and prejudice are not as apparent as they were a generation or two ago. As the United States celebrates the 60th anniversary of President Truman's act to desegregate the military, most Americans can acknowledge the acceptance of diversity of different ethnic cultures. The country as a whole has made significant advances through desegregation and the Civil Rights Movement.<sup>83</sup> National and state education and equal opportunity programs have assisted minorities in attaining the American dream.

With the acceptance of cultural diversity, the hip-hop culture has made its way into the mainstream of the American and international communities.<sup>84</sup> The urban inner-city expressions of music, fashion, and language derived from the ghettos of Chicago, New York, Detroit, and Los Angeles have turned into a \$4 billion-a-year industry.<sup>85</sup> Hip-hop can be seen on the streets of America, all over Europe, Asia, and even Iraq.<sup>86</sup>

Black athletes, actors, and musicians have revolutionized the entertainment industry. Some of the most influential of these have become national icons and internationally recognized as the best in their career fields. As Jeff Douglas expressed, "...the Black super-athlete has been an important part of our progress in the last 25 years." In recent years, Black musicians and entertainers have dominated the industry. Music moguls such as Russell Simmons, Sean "Puffy"

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<sup>82</sup> Radio One.

<sup>83</sup> Radio One.

<sup>84</sup> Charisse Jones, "Sweeping Study Finds Blacks in U.S. Diverse, Optimistic: Snapshot Offers Core Insights on 39 Million Community," *USA Today*, June 27- 29, 2008.

<sup>85</sup> Douglas.

<sup>86</sup> Maya Rockeymoore, Ph.D., *The Political Action Handbook: A How-To Guide for the Hip Hop Generation* (Washington, D.C.: R&A Press, 2004), 2.

Combs, and Shawn “Jay-Z” Carter all created their own music labels that scout music talents from the inner cities and inspire young men and women to follow in their footsteps. Black Academy Award recipients such as Halle Berry, Oprah Winfrey, and Denzel Washington also inspire Black men and women to strive for accomplishment.<sup>87</sup>

The studies also inform of the rise in Black Americans to participate in politics.<sup>88</sup> Successful Black politicians inspire African Americans to join the political process of selecting and electing state and national lawmakers. Former U.S. Representative Cynthia McKinney from Georgia, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Democratic presidential candidate Senator Barack Obama have energized the African American community to get involved with politics.<sup>89</sup>

Where does military service fit into the perceived future of African Americans? According to these surveys and others reviewed in preparation for this monograph, the military is no longer seen as an attractive route Blacks should follow to achieve education and prosperity. Evidence of this trend is apparent in the numbers of African Americans who are not enlisting. When Benjamin Jealous, president and CEO of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, discussed the future of African Americans, he stressed education, politics, and community as the key elements of success.<sup>90</sup>

## **Recommendations**

What should the Army do to prevent an underrepresentation of the African American population? This monograph argued three main trends that negatively affected African American enlistment in the U.S. Army, in recent years: the relative improvement in the social, economic, and cultural status of African Americans in the last 40 years; the Black community’s negative

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<sup>87</sup> Douglas.

<sup>88</sup> Chicago Urban League.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Justin Ewers, “Benjamin Jealous, the New Head of the NAACP, Talks about the Future of His Organization,” *U.S. News and World Report*, September 24, 2008.

perception of the Iraq war and the Bush administration; and the perceived successful future for African Americans in the United States. The Army must address each of these areas.

The first trend probably does not have a solution that the Army can have an affect on, or should apply resources to influence. The improved conditions for African Americans means that the Army is no longer the only outlet African Americans will pursue to achieve education and vocational training. The Army will almost certainly continue to experience declines in African American enlistments until the proportions reflect a proportional representation of the American population. But to ensure that they do not drop below a proportional level, the Army can address the other two trends: the negative perceptions of the war in Iraq and the Bush administration, and working within the movements defined as the future of Blacks in America.

To ensure that the numbers do not fall below an accurate representation, the Army should continue to grow in cultural diversity, work to change the misperception of the Army, and work within the characteristics identified as the future of Black Americans to communicate positive messages to potential African American enlistees and communities. Key to maintaining this long-standing codependency is for the Army to be able to communicate the opportunities and benefits it still offers. The Army also has to be prepared for a new presidential administration and for a shift in demographics as the Hispanic American population exceeds the African American population.

The Army should identify the key cultural diversity traits that affect the acceptance of African Americans. One of the traits that the Army can capitalize on is the use of the Internet to communicate news, information, and opportunities. The Army is already encouraging Soldiers to blog their personal experiences. This step appears to be heading in the right direction, taking into consideration how the Internet is now one of the most effective ways many young people are selecting to receive news and information. Soldiers should feel comfortable to join forums, participate in online communities, and blog to express their opinions without retribution or

punishment from commands who disapprove of their messages. In addition, the Army should continue to encourage all Soldiers to tell their stories.

Because a significant number of African Americans have a negative perception of the current presidential administration, the Army has to be prepared to redress the reputation of the Army. The Army must rebuild its image with the new president's administration. The Army should arrange to advertise its education benefits and job training opportunities on Black community Web pages. Potential Internet communities that the Army should consider for advertising and sponsorship include EbonyJet.com and BlackPlanet.com.

The Army should use current enlisted Soldiers and junior and mid-grade officers to convey strategic messages to adjacent communities. Although the Army conducts outreach programs to neighboring communities, which are usually in rural areas, the outreach has to reach inside the urban cities. Soldiers can make a significant impact by sharing some of their personal time with minority communities. Through these outreach programs, the communities observe Soldiers who care about their community.

The Illinois National Guard has been successful in its urban community outreach program. For instance, every summer the 178<sup>th</sup> Infantry, located at 5200 S. Cottage Grove, Chicago, conducts open house events, allowing the neighboring community to visit the unit and Soldiers. The unit also participates in Chicago's South Side Bud Billiken Parade, a traditionally African American celebration. The Illinois National Guard also sponsors community basketball tournaments, allowing Soldiers to interact with potential candidates. These types of outreach programs present a challenge for the Army because unlike the 178<sup>th</sup> Infantry, most units are based in rural areas. But if the Army is capable of reaching into the urban areas, maybe the Soldiers can help change the image of the Army.

Generally, African Americans perceive a positive future--that they are capable of enhancing their quality of life above that of previous generations. To work within the propensity of this perceived future, the Army should conduct partnerships with minority-led corporations,

superstars, and traditional cultural events to promote the cultural diversity of the Army. It would be much more powerful of an advertisement mechanism for minorities to see cultural events and minority leaders promoting the Army. The Army is effective in promoting NASCAR and the Professional Bull Riders. Maybe the same interest and financing can be directed toward urban events that are frequented by minorities. Combined with the weight and influence of superstars, the Army can successfully promote a positive image of the Army.

Ultimately, the Army has to be prepared to address its reputation once the 2008 elections are over. The Army has to be capable of understanding the growing cultural acceptance of the nation, changing the perceived attitude of the Army by minorities, and working with the Black community to incorporate itself into the perceived future of Blacks in America. When Hispanic Americans pass African Americans in population and in enlistment, the Army has to be prepared for another demographic shift. Concurrently, the Army has to be prepared to accept another culture that desires the American dream.

## **Conclusion**

This monograph provided evidence of three key factors that correlate to the apparent decline in African American enlistment in the United States Army. Until recently, Black Americans were overrepresented in the Army because military service was one of the best ways to secure one's citizenship within the United States. In the past two decades, America has become more accepting of minority cultures, which creates more opportunities for Black Americans to increase their socioeconomic status. Many African Americans and other national leaders who remember Vietnam perceive the war in Iraq to be unjust and are discouraging African Americans from enlisting.

The Army has made remarkable advancements and led the nation in providing equal opportunities and advancement for all minorities. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Frederick Douglass predicted that through military service, African Americans would one day harvest the benefits of

being equal American citizens. President Truman signed Executive Order 9981 on July 26, 1948, which mandated the desegregation of the United States military. Reluctantly, the Army followed the orders to break through the racial divides that had separated the country since its inception.

In the six decades that followed Executive Order 9981, the Army and African Americans have shared a codependent relationship. Many Blacks used the Army as a starting point to obtain education, social status, and job skills to enter into businesses. The Army benefited from having an increased availability of human resources to implement national strategies. Evidence displayed in this monograph suggests the correlation between military service and citizenship is no longer valid. The “Greatest Generation” enlisted by the millions in World War II because they felt it was their civic responsibility. In the Global War on Terror, the Army is having difficulties in meeting its recruitment objectives. Even more astounding is the rate at which African Americans have decided to break the tradition of Army service.

At the height of the Cold War, in an all-volunteer Army, Black Americans who were only 11 percent of the population made up more than 30 percent of the Army, compared with now, when less than 13 percent of the population represents about 17 percent of the Army. What is notable is that personal satisfaction surveys prove that Black Americans continue to experience the highest job satisfaction in the Army. The Army is not having a difficult time *retaining* African Americans; the Army is having a difficult time in *attracting* Black Americans. Although it is inconclusive, some political and cultural scientists suggest that in the future the Army will reflect a true representation of the African American population. Some scientists fear that if the African American population is underrepresented in the Army, then the rest of the society will criticize the Black community for not pulling its fair share of the weight of defending this nation.

The United States of America is considered to be the melting pot society, where different cultures pursue their American dream. Throughout different stages of America’s early history, ethnic groups from all over Europe migrated to the Eastern shores and took their place in government, education, the corporate world, and society. Irish, Italians, Poles, and others

remember dark days when their ethnic groups lived in ghettos and fought for equality and their rightful place as American citizens. The nation embraced these minorities and accepted their cultural value to the nation.

After 400 years of slavery, segregation, lynching, Jim Crow laws, and the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans are now exerting their culture not only in the U.S. but also throughout the world. The Black influence is evident in music, fashion, athletics, entertainment, and most recently in politics and corporate America. Federal and state equal opportunity, affirmative action, and education programs assisted African Americans in making these advancements possible. Education and economic advancements created more opportunities for African Americans to excel.

Education appears to be the most significant factor in propelling Blacks into better socioeconomic levels. Two generations ago, very few African Americans were educated past a minimum reading level; fewer received a high school education, and even fewer attended colleges. African Americans are taking a greater interest in education. Previously, the Army was successful in encouraging young Black men and women into military service to support their aspirations to education. With federal, state, and private organizations' incentives and financial aid, young Black men and women are finding alternative methods to achieving advanced educations.

Two such organizations, the United Negro College Fund and the Minority Scholarship Fund, assist thousands of young Blacks every year in achieving their education goals. Statistics show that the number of Blacks graduating from high school has more than tripled and college attendance has quadrupled in one generation. Some social scientist studies prove that African Americans are closing the educational gap between young Whites. Every salary survey this monograph investigated provided empirical data that a higher education a person receives correlates to a higher salary a person receives. African Americans have improved their socioeconomic status. Since the 1960s, the African American middle class has more than

quadrupled. The latest census illustrated that almost half of Black families own their own homes.

A Pentagon spokesperson stated the decline in Black enlistment in the Army is a result of “young African Americans finding better jobs.”<sup>91</sup>

In addition to education, several other reasons are corollary for the expansion of the African American middle class. The government offers incentives to minority businesses in the form of grants and loans. These incentives are sometimes in addition to small-business grants and loans that are available to small-business owners. Affirmative action programs, which are now nearly extinct, gave priority to hiring of minorities and offering government contracts to African American businesses. Many Black Americans attribute their rise to the middle class to their military service.

What has become so vexing in recent years is that with the codependence between Blacks and the Army over the past 60 years, the decline in enlistment correlates to the perception of the conduct of the war in Iraq. During the two Great Wars of the 20th century, millions of African Americans volunteered for military service even when their service was undesired. Some social analysts suggest that the current Black Americans who are within the available recruitment window are the children and grandchildren of the generation that remembers Vietnam. That generation has the lingering sentiments of young Black men fighting for the civil liberties of Vietnamese when they were not guaranteed their own civil liberties in their own country. This is the generation steering its children and grandchildren away from the Army.

Many African Americans believe the Bush administration intentionally deceived Congress and the American people into going to war with Iraq. Politician and activist groups exacerbate the disbelief by formulating protests and proposals calling for withdrawal troops from Iraq. Other influential Americans are flooding the blogosphere with petitions, invitations to

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<sup>91</sup> Office of the Army Demographics.

rallies, and other antiwar events. Military organizations and African American network communities will continue to sway young potential enlistees away from the Army.

African American representation in the Army will continue to decline to show a true reflection of the American population. The future of African Americans no longer includes the Army to cement citizenship; these rights are guaranteed at birth. American cultural developments have eliminated the necessity for African Americans to enlist into the Army to achieve education. Socioeconomically, African Americans are achieving higher standards of living without the Army. The African American community perceives the Bush administration as a catastrophic failure and thus steer the available Black population away from military service. African Americans perceive positive developments for the future – and this future does not include military service.

## **Appendix**

**NAACP.** A nonprofit organization formed in 1909 by a multiracial group of progressive thinkers, with the objective of insuring the political, educational, social and economic equality of minority groups. The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People since its inception has been to eliminate race prejudice and remove all barriers of racial discrimination through the democratic process.

**Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome.** A theory developed by Dr. Joy DeGruy Leary that explains the etiology of many of the adaptive survival behaviors in African American communities throughout the United States and the Diaspora.

**Jim Crow laws.** Often referred to as a system or legal state as the Jim Crow Era or merely Jim Crow, these were state and local laws enacted primarily but not exclusively in the Southern and Border States of the United States between 1876 and 1965. They mandated *de jure* segregation in all public facilities, with a supposedly “separate but equal” status for Black Americans and members of other non-White racial groups. The reality is that the separate facilities for Black Americans were inferior to those for Whites.

**Radio One.** The largest urban radio broadcaster in the nation that specifically provides programming to, for, and by African Americans. Radio One owns or operates 53 radio stations in 16 urban markets in the United States. Radio One, a Black-owned company, is the parent company of Magazine One, Inc; Giant Magazine; TV One, LLC, a cable/satellite network programming primarily for African-Americans; Reach Media, Inc; [www.blackAmericaweb.com](http://www.blackAmericaweb.com); and the Tom Joyner Morning Show, including other businesses associated with Tom Joyner.

The founder and chairperson of Radio One, Catherine L. Hughes, commissioned Yankelovich, a leading consumer market research and analytics company, to conduct the largest nationwide survey to provide insight into African Americans feelings about their future, past, and present as well as details on their relationship with media, advertising, and technology. Hughes

and her son, Alfred Liggins III, Radio One chief executive officer and president, decided to release the study to the world. According to the Hughes and Liggins, the study was done for two reasons: to better understand the rich diversity among Black Americans and to help Radio One better serve this large, diverse, often misunderstood group.<sup>92</sup>

**Yankelovich.** A leading consumer market research and analytic company that conducted the survey for Radio One. Yankelovich conducts studies for consumer-based companies and has provided these types of surveys on consumer attitudes, values and lifestyles for more than 50 years.<sup>93</sup> Yankelovich says it provides credible information about demographics, which helps consumer-based companies to create an effective database of consumer attitudes and trends.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Black America Study, <http://www.blackamericastudy.com/summary/> (accessed July 30, 2008).

<sup>93</sup> Yankelovich, <http://www.yankelovich.com/> (accessed July 30, 2008).

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

## Service Graphs

Table 1, FY 2005 NPS Active Component Enlisted Accessions by Race/Ethnicity, Service, and Gender with Civilian Comparison Group. Source, Office of Army Demographics.

RACE/ ETHNICITY	ARMY*			NAVY			MARINE CORPS			AIR FORCE			TOTAL DoD			18-24 YR OLD CIVILIANS		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total												
<b>a. Number</b>																		
White	38,716	6,772	45,488	20,670	3,579	24,249	25,065	1,716	26,781	11,623	3,020	14,643	96,074	15,087	111,161	11,084,725	10,768,306	21,833,281
Black	5,323	2,261	7,584	3,612	1,472	7,084	2,185	282	2,467	1,913	835	2,748	13,033	4,830	19,883	1,879,718	2,102,898	3,982,615
AIAN	558	182	740	2,177	454	2,631	362	63	425	108	41	149	3,205	240	3,945	137,079	141,008	278,088
Asian	1,032	260	1,292	1,547	300	1,847	613	65	678	445	146	591	3,637	771	4,408	574,148	571,617	1,145,765
NHPI	421	138	559	386	71	457	276	22	298	186	83	269	1,269	314	1,383	37,837	45,164	83,021
Two or more	290	60	350	497	125	622	178	18	196	183	59	242	1,148	262	1,410	321,441	301,874	623,315
Unknown	6,084	1,227	7,311	681	158	839	1,074	96	1,170	331	119	450	8,170	1,600	9,770	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52,424</b>	<b>10,900</b>	<b>63,324</b>	<b>31,570</b>	<b>6,159</b>	<b>37,729</b>	<b>29,753</b>	<b>2,262</b>	<b>32,015</b>	<b>14,789</b>	<b>4,303</b>	<b>19,092</b>	<b>128,536</b>	<b>23,624</b>	<b>152,160</b>	<b>14,035,017</b>	<b>13,931,068</b>	<b>27,966,085</b>
Hispanic	6,157	1,564	7,721	4,952	1,134	6,086	4,772	434	5,206	1,570	324	2,094	17,451	3,658	21,107	2,610,809	2,318,998	4,929,807
Not Hispanic**	46,367	9,336	55,603	26,618	5,025	31,643	24,981	1,838	26,809	13,219	3,779	16,998	111,085	19,968	131,033	11,424,209	11,612,069	23,036,278
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52,424</b>	<b>10,900</b>	<b>63,324</b>	<b>31,570</b>	<b>6,159</b>	<b>37,729</b>	<b>29,753</b>	<b>2,262</b>	<b>32,015</b>	<b>14,789</b>	<b>4,303</b>	<b>19,092</b>	<b>128,536</b>	<b>23,624</b>	<b>152,160</b>	<b>14,035,017</b>	<b>13,931,068</b>	<b>27,966,085</b>
<b>b. Percent</b>																		
White	73.85%	62.13%	71.83%	65.47%	58.11%	64.27%	84.24%	75.86%	83.65%	78.39%	70.18%	76.70%	74.74%	63.86%	73.08%	78.98%	77.30%	78.14%
Black	10.15%	20.74%	11.98%	17.78%	23.90%	18.78%	7.34%	12.47%	9.71%	12.94%	19.41%	14.39%	11.70%	20.39%	13.07%	13.39%	15.10%	14.24%
AIAN	1.06%	1.67%	1.17%	6.90%	7.37%	6.97%	1.22%	2.79%	1.33%	0.73%	0.93%	0.78%	2.49%	3.13%	2.99%	0.98%	1.01%	0.99%
Asian	1.97%	2.39%	2.04%	4.90%	4.87%	4.90%	2.06%	2.87%	2.12%	3.01%	3.39%	3.10%	2.83%	3.26%	2.90%	4.09%	4.10%	4.10%
NHPI	0.80%	1.27%	0.88%	1.22%	1.13%	1.21%	0.93%	0.97%	0.93%	1.26%	1.93%	1.41%	0.99%	1.33%	1.04%	0.27%	0.32%	0.30%
Two or more	0.58%	0.53%	1.55%	1.57%	2.03%	1.65%	0.60%	0.80%	0.61%	1.34%	1.37%	1.27%	0.89%	1.11%	0.93%	2.29%	2.17%	2.23%
Unknown	11.61%	11.26%	11.55%	2.16%	2.57%	2.22%	3.61%	4.24%	3.65%	2.24%	2.77%	2.36%	6.36%	6.77%	6.42%	NA	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>															
Hispanic	11.74%	14.33%	12.19%	15.89%	18.41%	16.13%	16.04%	19.19%	16.38%	10.62%	12.18%	10.97%	13.58%	15.48%	13.87%	18.60%	16.63%	17.63%
Not Hispanic**	88.26%	85.63%	87.81%	84.31%	81.89%	83.87%	83.98%	80.81%	83.74%	89.38%	87.82%	89.03%	86.42%	84.52%	86.13%	81.40%	83.33%	82.37%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>															

\* The Army's previously reported NPS accession achievement of 65,019 included three days of accessions in FY 2004 (September 28-30 2004), in conjunction with its FY 2005 recruiting calendar.

The number in the report account reflects NPS accessions from 1 October 2004 through 30 September 2005.

\*\*Includes individuals who indicated non-Hispanic ethnicity or did not respond to ethnicity question.

Table 2, FY 2000 Race/Ethnicity of Active Component Enlisted Members, by Service, and Civilian Labor Force 18–44 Years Old (Percent). Source, Office of Army Demographics.

Table 3.3. FY 2000 Race/Ethnicity of Active Component Enlisted Members, by Service, and Civilian Labor Force 18–44 Years Old (Percent)						
Race/ Ethnicity	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DOD	18- to 44-Year-Old Civilians
White	55.2	60.6	66.3	72.8	62.5	69.5
Black	29.1	20.6	16.2	18.4	22.4	12.4
Hispanic	9.1	9.9	13.5	5.5	9.0	13.1
Other	6.6	8.8	4.0	3.3	6.0	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Columns may not add to total due to rounding.  
Also see Appendix Table B-25 (Race/Ethnicity by Service and Gender).  
Source: Civilian data from Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey File, September 2000.

Table 3. FY 2005 Active Component Enlisted Members by Race/Ethnicity, Service, and Gender with Civilian Comparison Group. Source, Office of Army Demographics.

RACE/ ETHNICITY	ARMY			NAVY			MARINE CORPS			AIR FORCE			TOTAL DoD			18-44 YEAR OLD CIVILIANS		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total												
<b>a. Number</b>																		
White	237,028	26,909	263,937	170,586	23,404	193,990	111,538	5,928	117,466	165,570	33,418	198,988	684,722	89,659	774,381	38,858,309	31,518,494	70,376,803
Black	73,394	23,478	96,872	51,532	13,619	65,151	17,511	1,741	19,252	33,117	14,339	47,456	175,554	53,177	228,731	5,324,338	5,894,116	11,218,454
AIAN	3,024	814	3,838	9,305	1,938	11,263	1,614	198	1,812	1,138	416	1,574	15,101	3,386	18,487	383,382	305,390	688,772
Asian	10,623	2,206	12,829	16,430	2,159	18,589	3,082	251	3,333	4,324	1,289	5,613	34,459	5,905	40,364	2,283,655	1,864,822	4,148,476
NHPI	0	0	0	1,297	234	1,531	877	63	940	1,504	515	2,019	3,678	812	4,490	122,785	122,807	245,593
Two or more	0	0	0	2,773	537	3,310	1,140	89	1,229	2,824	993	3,817	6,737	1,619	8,356	760,315	686,295	1,446,609
Unknown	24,010	3,789	27,799	9,355	1,787	11,142	15,436	1,579	17,015	12,715	3,936	16,651	61,516	11,091	72,807	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348,079</b>	<b>57,196</b>	<b>405,275</b>	<b>261,278</b>	<b>43,698</b>	<b>304,976</b>	<b>151,198</b>	<b>9,849</b>	<b>161,047</b>	<b>221,212</b>	<b>54,906</b>	<b>276,118</b>	<b>981,767</b>	<b>165,649</b>	<b>1,147,416</b>	<b>47,732,783</b>	<b>40,391,924</b>	<b>88,124,706</b>
<b>b. Percent</b>																		
White	68.10%	47.03%	65.13%	65.29%	53.56%	63.61%	73.77%	60.19%	72.94%	74.83%	60.86%	72.07%	69.74%	54.13%	67.49%	81.41%	78.03%	79.86%
Black	21.09%	41.05%	29.90%	19.72%	31.17%	21.36%	11.58%	17.68%	11.95%	14.97%	26.12%	17.19%	17.88%	32.10%	19.93%	11.15%	14.59%	12.73%
AIAN	0.87%	1.42%	0.95%	3.58%	4.48%	3.69%	1.07%	2.01%	1.13%	0.52%	0.78%	0.57%	1.54%	2.04%	1.61%	0.80%	0.76%	0.78%
Asian	3.05%	3.86%	3.17%	6.29%	4.94%	6.10%	2.04%	2.53%	2.07%	195%	23.3%	203%	3.51%	3.56%	3.52%	4.78%	4.62%	4.71%
NHPI	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.50%	0.54%	0.50%	0.58%	0.64%	0.58%	0.68%	0.94%	0.73%	0.37%	0.49%	0.39%	0.26%	0.30%	0.28%
Two or more	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.06%	1.23%	1.09%	0.75%	0.90%	0.76%	1.28%	1.81%	1.38%	0.69%	0.98%	0.73%	1.59%	1.70%	1.64%
Unknown	6.90%	6.62%	6.86%	3.58%	4.09%	3.63%	10.21%	16.03%	10.57%	5.75%	7.17%	6.03%	6.27%	6.70%	6.33%	NA	NA	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>														
Hispanic	11.36%	12.82%	11.57%	8.18%	9.19%	8.32%	14.12%	20.34%	14.50%	58.83%	69.93%	60.93%	9.69%	10.36%	9.79%	19.06%	13.81%	16.66%
Not Hispanic*	88.64%	87.18%	88.43%	91.82%	90.81%	91.68%	85.88%	79.66%	85.50%	94.17%	93.07%	93.93%	90.31%	89.64%	90.21%	80.94%	86.19%	83.34%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>														

Table 4. FY 2005 Active Component Officer Accessions and Officer Corps by Race/Ethnicity and Service with Civilian Comparison Groups. Source, Office of Army Demographics.

RACE/ ETHNICITY	SERVICE						CIVILIAN					
	ARMY		NAVY		MARINE CORPS		AIR FORCE		TOTAL DoD		COLLEGE GRADUATES*	
#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#
<b>a. FY 2005 Active Component Officer Accessions</b>												
White	4,828	74.08%	2,874	80.26%	1,288	66.77%	4,164	75.96%	13,154	75.13%	12,370,401	78.87%
Black	743	11.40%	282	7.87%	72	3.73%	336	6.13%	1,433	8.18%	1,270,851	8.10%
AIAN	31	0.48%	28	0.78%	6	0.31%	26	0.47%	91	0.52%	60,981	0.39%
Asian	355	5.45%	137	3.83%	54	2.80%	237	4.32%	783	4.47%	1,732,182	11.04%
NHPI	1	0.02%	12	0.34%	9	0.47%	23	0.42%	45	0.26%	47,101	0.30%
Two or more	0	0.00%	64	1.79%	23	1.19%	56	1.02%	143	0.82%	202,805	1.29%
Unknown	559	8.58%	184	5.14%	472	24.73%	640	11.67%	1,860	10.62%	0	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,517</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>3,581</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1,929</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,482</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>17,509</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>15,684,321</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Hispanic	357	5.48%	222	6.20%	141	7.31%	107	1.95%	827	4.72%	1,108,073	7.08%
Not Hispanic**	6,160	94.52%	3,359	93.80%	1,788	92.69%	5,375	98.05%	16,682	95.28%	14,576,249	92.94%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,517</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>3,581</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1,929</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>5,482</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>17,509</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>15,684,321</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>b. FY 2005 Active Component Officer Corps</b>												
White	53,191	77.16%	42,987	83.81%	13,685	81.08%	60,871	83.10%	170,734	81.17%	24,153,014	80.52%
Black	8,611	12.49%	3,857	7.52%	950	5.63%	4,814	6.57%	18,232	8.67%	2,518,401	8.40%
AIAN	340	0.49%	223	0.43%	104	0.62%	267	0.36%	934	0.44%	122,117	0.41%
Asian	2,526	3.66%	1,723	3.38%	338	2.00%	1,790	2.44%	6,377	3.03%	2,786,836	9.29%
NHPI	0	0.00%	78	0.13%	58	0.34%	144	0.20%	280	0.13%	76,023	0.25%
Two or more	0	0.00%	380	0.74%	167	0.99%	593	0.81%	1,140	0.54%	341,577	1.14%
Unknown	4,264	6.19%	2,043	3.98%	1,577	9.34%	4,772	6.51%	12,656	6.02%	0	NA
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,932</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>51,291</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>16,879</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>73,251</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>210,333</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>29,997,968</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Hispanic	3,560	5.16%	2,729	5.32%	1,040	6.16%	2,774	3.79%	10,103	4.80%	2,008,933	6.70%
Not Hispanic**	65,372	94.84%	48,562	94.68%	15,839	93.84%	70,477	96.21%	200,250	95.20%	27,989,036	93.30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,932</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>51,291</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>16,879</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>73,251</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>210,333</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>29,997,968</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table 5. Distribution of FY 2000 Active Component NPS applicants by race/ethnicity and gender. Source, Office of Army Demographics.

Table 2.2. Race/Ethnicity and Gender of FY 2000 Active Component NPS Applicants,* by Service (Percent)					
	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DoD
<b>MALES</b>					
White	61.3	56.7	65.8	68.3	61.9
Black	21.8	21.2	14.4	19.1	20.0
Hispanic	11.6	12.1	14.0	6.8	11.5
Other	5.3	9.9	5.8	5.9	6.7
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>FEMALES</b>					
White	45.7	47.5	57.3	56.4	48.9
Black	37.1	29.7	21.9	29.4	33.0
Hispanic	11.3	12.8	14.2	7.6	11.1
Other	5.9	10.1	6.6	6.6	7.1
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>TOTAL</b>					
Male	74.1	78.9	91.6	69.3	77.2
Female	25.9	21.1	8.4	30.7	22.8

Columns may not add to total due to rounding.

\* Applicant data reported for FY 2000 are based on the DMDC edit version of the USMEPCOM file, which has been "cleaned" by the edit process. FY 2000 applicant data are consistent with Information Delivery System (IDS) data.

Also see Appendix Tables A-3 (Race/Ethnicity by Service and Gender) and A-4 (Ethnicity by Service).

Table 6. Race/Ethnicity and Gender of FY 2000 Active Component NPS Accessions, by Service, and Civilians 18–24 Years Old (Percent). Source, Office of Army Demographics.

Table 2.5. Race/Ethnicity and Gender of FY 2000 Active Component NPS Accessions, by Service, and Civilians 18–24 Years Old (Percent)					
	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DoD
<b>MALES</b>					
White	64.8	59.5	67.8	70.7	64.9
Black	19.5	19.2	12.4	16.9	17.6
Hispanic	11.1	12.0	14.5	7.1	11.3
Other	4.6	9.3	5.3	5.4	6.2
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>FEMALES</b>					
White	48.2	50.9	59.5	58.8	52.3
Black	36.3	27.8	18.0	26.2	30.3
Hispanic	10.2	11.9	16.1	8.3	10.6
Other	5.3	9.4	6.4	6.7	6.8
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
<b>TOTAL</b>					
Male	79.1	81.6	92.9	74.1	81.2
Female	20.9	18.4	7.1	25.9	18.8
White	61.3	57.9	67.2	67.6	62.5
Black	23.0	20.8	12.8	19.3	20.0
Hispanic	10.9	12.0	14.6	7.4	11.2
Other	4.7	9.3	5.4	5.7	6.3
<b>NON-INSTITUTIONALIZED CIVILIANS 18–24 YEARS OLD</b>					
White	65.6	Black	14.3	Hispanic	15.0
				Other	5.1
				<b>Total</b>	100.0
				Male	49.8
				Female	50.2

Columns may not add to total due to rounding.

Also see Appendix Tables B-3 (Race/Ethnicity by Service and Gender) and B-4 (Ethnicity by Service).

Source: Civilian data from Bureau of Labor Statistics Current Population Survey File, October 1999–September 2000.

Table 7. FY 2000 Active Component Minority Officer Accessions and Officer Corps, by Service (Percent). Source, Office of Army Demographics.

Table 4.5. FY 2000 Active Component Minority Officer Accessions and Officer Corps, by Service (Percent)					
Minority	Army	Navy	Marine Corps	Air Force	DoD
<b>ACTIVE COMPONENT OFFICER ACCESSIONS</b>					
Black	12.0	7.6	5.7	8.0	9.0
Hispanic	5.9	6.0	6.3	1.5	4.6
Other	7.6	7.3	4.8	9.3	7.8
<b>Total Minority Officer Accessions</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>21.4</b>
<b>ACTIVE COMPONENT OFFICER CORPS</b>					
Black	11.4	6.5	6.5	6.4	8.1
Hispanic	4.1	5.5	5.1	2.2	3.9
Other	5.5	4.8	3.1	3.0	4.3
<b>Total Minority Officers</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>11.7</b>	<b>16.2</b>

Columns may not add to total due to rounding.  
 "Other" includes Native Americans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders.  
 Also see Appendix Table B-34 (Race/Ethnicity by Service).

Table 8. Graduation Rates at Historically Black colleges and Universities, 2005. Source, Journal of Blacks in Higher Education.

Institution	Black Student Graduation Rate, 2005	Institution	Black Student Graduation Rate, 2005
Spelman College	77 %	Florida A&M Univ.	34%
Fisk University	64	Grambling State Univ.	33
Morehouse College	64	Rust College	33
Miles College	62	Delaware State Univ.	32
Howard University	56	Bethune-Cookman	31
Elizabeth City State	55	Livingstone College	31
Hampton University	55	Shaw University	31
N. Carolina Central	49	Cheyney Univ. of Pa.	30
Tuskegee University	48	St. Augustine's College	30
Winston-Salem State	48	Univ. of Ark.-Pine Bluff	29
Bennett College	46	Lane College	28
S. Carolina State Univ.	46	Norfolk State Univ.	27
Alcorn State Univ.	45	Paine College	27
N.C. A&T State Univ.	44	Coppin State Univ.	26
Stillman College	44	St. Paul's College	26
Univ. of Md. E. Shore	44	Southern University	26
Johnson C. Smith Univ.	41	Central State Univ.	25
Fayetteville State Univ.	40	Fort Valley State Univ.	25
Lincoln Univ. (Penn.)	40	Lincoln Univ. (Missouri)	25
Virginia State Univ.	40	Benedict College	24
Morgan State Univ.	39	Virginia Union Univ.	24
Alabama A&M Univ.	37	Alabama State Univ.	23
Miss. Valley State Univ.	37	Savannah State Univ.	20
Prairie View A&M	37	LeMoyne Owen College	16
Jackson State Univ.	36	Texas Southern Univ.	14
Tennessee State Univ.	36	Univ. of Dist. of Col.	7
Clark Atlanta Univ.	34		

Table 9. The progress of Black graduation rates at the nation's highest ranked universities, 2005.  
Source, Journal of Blacks in Higher Education –

Institution	1998 Rate	2005 Rate	Difference
Calif. Institute of Technology	60%	83%	+23
Carnegie Mellon University	47	65	+18
University of Pennsylvania	69	85	+16
Columbia University	72	87	+15
Univ. of Calif. at Los Angeles	58	73	+15
Rice University	71	84	+13
University of Chicago	69	80	+11
Northwestern University	81	91	+10
Emory University	74	82	+8
University of Notre Dame	77	85	+8
Vanderbilt University	74	82	+8
University of Calif. at Berkeley	63	70	+7
Cornell University	77	83	+6
Stanford University	84	89	+5
Johns Hopkins University	78	82	+4
Dartmouth College	85	88	+3
Duke University	84	87	+3
Princeton University	90	93	+3
University of Michigan	64	67	+3
Yale University	86	89	+3
Brown University	89	91	+2
Georgetown University	85	87	+2
Mass. Institute of Technology	79	81	+2
Univ. of N.C.-Chapel Hill	67	69	+2
Harvard University	94	95	+1
University of Virginia	87	86	-1
Tufts University	82	80	-2

Table 10. Black graduation rates at flagstaff state universities, 2005. Source, Journal of Blacks in Higher Education.

University of Virginia	86.0 %	West Virginia University	49.0 %
Univ. of Calif.-Berkeley	70.0	Louisiana State Univ.	46.0
Univ. of New Hampshire	70.0	University of Iowa	45.0
Univ. of N.C.-Chapel Hill	69.0	University of Kentucky	45.0
University of Michigan	67.0	Univ. of Mississippi	45.0
Penn State University	65.0	Ohio State University	43.0
Univ. of Connecticut	65.0	Univ. of North Dakota	43.0
University of Florida	65.0	<b>National Average*</b>	<b>42.0</b>
University of Delaware	63.0	University of Oklahoma	41.0
State Univ. of New York	63.0	University of Kansas	40.0
Rutgers Univ. (N.J.)	61.0	University of Maryland	40.0
University of Georgia	61.0	Univ. of Rhode Island	40.0
University of Texas	61.0	University of Montana	39.0
University of Illinois	60.0	University of Arizona	38.0
University of Vermont	58.0	University of Idaho	38.0
Univ. of Washington	58.0	Univ. of New Mexico	37.0
University of Missouri	56.0	University of Minnesota	35.0
University of Maine	55.0	University of Wyoming	35.0
University of Alabama	54.0	University of Hawaii	34.0
Univ. of South Carolina	54.0	University of Nevada	33.0
University of Oregon	53.0	University of Arkansas	32.0
University of Colorado	52.0	University of Nebraska	32.0
University of Tennessee	52.0	University of Utah	32.0
Univ. of Massachusetts	50.0	Univ. of South Dakota	25.0
Indiana University	49.0	University of Alaska	15.0
University of Wisconsin	49.0	Univ. of Dist. of Col.	7.0

Table 11. The nation's most prestigious colleges and universities; Black student graduation rate compared to Whites, 2005. Source Journal of Blacks in Higher Education.

Institution	White Rate*	Black Rate	% Point Difference	Institution	White Rate*	Black Rate	% Point Difference
Mount Holyoke College	78%	82%	-4	Duke University	94%	87%	+7
Smith College	83	87	-4	Georgetown University	94	87	+7
Macalester College	82	84	-2	Rice University	91	84	+7
Wellesley College	90	92	-2	Swarthmore College	93	86	+7
Pomona College	80	81	-1	University of Virginia	93	86	+7
Washington University	90	90	0	Yale University	96	89	+7
Wake Forest University	87	86	+1	Dartmouth College	96	88	+8
Wesleyan University	91	90	+1	Haverford College	93	85	+8
Amherst College	96	94	+2	University of Pennsylvania	93	85	+8
Harvard University	97	95	+2	Bowdoin College	91	82	+9
Oberlin College	80	78	+2	Claremont-McKenna College	81	72	+9
Calif. Inst. of Technology	86	83	+3	Univ. of Southern California	79	70	+9
Columbia University	90	87	+3	Bucknell University	89	79	+10
Davidson College	91	88	+3	Cornell University	93	83	+10
Emory University	85	82	+3	University of Notre Dame	96	85	+11
Northwestern University	94	91	+3	Tufts University	92	80	+12
Vanderbilt University	85	82	+3	Mass. Inst. of Technology	94	81	+13
Brown University	96	91	+5	Middlebury College	92	79	+13
Grinnell College	86	81	+5	Univ. of N. Car.-Chapel Hill	83	69	+14
Princeton University	98	93	+5	Washington and Lee Univ.	90	76	+14
Colgate University	90	84	+6	Trinity College	87	72	+15
Hamilton College	86	80	+6	Univ. of Calif.-Los Angeles	88	73	+15
Johns Hopkins University	88	82	+6	Univ. of Calif.-Berkeley	86	70	+16
Stanford University	95	89	+6	Carnegie Mellon University	82	65	+17
University of Chicago	86	80	+6	Colby College	88	68	+20
Vassar College	89	83	+6	Carleton College	90	69	+21
Williams College	96	90	+6	University of Michigan	88	67	+21
Bryn Mawr College	83	76	+7	Bates College	88	64	+24

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